

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 MC-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00

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EA/P - MR. SMITH

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

USLO PEKING PRIORITY

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, SOPN, US, TW, CH

SUBJECT: DEPT SPOKESMAN'S REPLY TO QUERIES ON GLOBE STORY
RE TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM TAIWAN

REF: TAIPEI 1587

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. AT NOON PRESS BRIEFING TODAY, HEARST'S WALLACH ASKED ABOUT THE GLOBE REPORT THAT PRESIDENT FORD IN PEKING LAST DECEMBER AGREED SECRETLY TO REDUCE BY 50 PERCENT US FORCES ON TAIWAN. TRATTNER RESPONDED, "FIRST OF ALL, WE DON'T COMMENT ON THE CONTENT OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CHINESE LEADERS IN PEKING. WE EXPECT TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF REDUCING OUR TROOP LEVELS ON TAIWAN,
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CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED IN THE

SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE." REUTER'S NELSON ASKED WHAT THE US TROOP LEVEL ON TAIWAN IS NOW AND WHAT IT IS ENVISAGED TO BE IN THE FUTURE. TRATTNER REPLIED THAT THE TROOP LEVEL NOW IS ABOUT 2500 US MILITARY PERSONNEL, NONE OF WHOM IS COMBAT PERSONNEL. AS TO DETAILS ON WHAT THEY DO, ETC., HE SUGGESTED THAT DOD BE ASKED FOR THE ANSWER. HE ADDED THAT AS A GENERAL PRINCIPLE WE DO NOT COMMENT ON POSSIBLE DEPLOYMENT OF TROOPS. "WE'VE SAID WE'RE GOING TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF REDUCING TROOP LEVELS ON TAIWAN, BUT I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU A TIMETABLE OR GET INTO A DISCUSSION OF THE DETAILS." NELSON THEN ASKED IF THESE FIGURES WOULD BE, SAY, SINCE 1972? TRATTNER SAID HE DIDN'T HAVE THAT DETAIL, BUT THOUGHT HE COULD PROBABLY GET IT. WE HAVE SINCE INFORMED HIM THAT THERE WERE ABOUT 10,000 US MILITARY PERSONNEL ON TAIWAN IN 1972.

2. EMBASSY MAY DRAW ON PRESS SPOKESMAN'S COMMENTS IN RESPONDING TO PRESS QUERIES ON GLOBE STORY. QUESTIONS CONCERNING SHU LIN KOU AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS SHOULD BE HANDLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING GUIDANCE. FOR LATTER, THIS IS: "WE DO NOT COMMENT ON THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR DEPLOYMENTS". OTHER QUESTIONS BEYOND SCOPE OF ABOVE SHOULD BE REFERRED TO WASHINGTON. INGERSOLL

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